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# Africa Review

27 October 1978

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AFRICA REVIEW

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### Rhodesia: Scheduled Meeting of Frontline Presidents

The meeting of the frontline presidents scheduled for today in Dar es Salaam is crucial to continued progress toward a Rhodesian settlement. The frontline presidents and the guerrillas they support are sharply divided on a number of issues. Nevertheless, they should be able to hold together the fragile consensus that has guided their pursuit of a Rhodesian settlement.

### A Tense Atmosphere

Today's meeting is the first since early last month when the presidents engaged in a bitter debate over the mid-August meeting between Rhodesian Prime Minister Smith and ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo. The meeting had been arranged by Zambian President Kaunda, who was supported by Botswanan President Khama. Tanzanian President Nyerere bitterly opposed the meeting and was backed by Mozambican President Machel, Angolan President Neto, and Nkomo's Patriotic Front partner, ZANU leader Robert Mugabe.

The long-held belief on the part of Nyerere and Machel that Kaunda is committed to a separate settlement between Nkomo and Smith has been strengthened by Kaunda's recent decision to resume use of the southern rail route through Rhodesia to move Zambia's imports and exports. Although the economic imperatives behind Kaunda's decision are apparent to all the other presidents, Nyerere and Machel regard his decision as a political compromise. They can be expected to point out to Kaunda that the recent Rhodesian raids into Zambia prove that a deal with Smith is impossible.

### A Full Agenda

The presidents have a full agenda. Basically, two major issues confront them: further settlement talks and Patriotic Front unity. The presidents are in general agreement that talks should take place; the basic questions are timing and context.

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Because of the recent Rhodesian raids into Zambia, neither Kaunda nor Nkomo are prepared to accept further talks with Smith, at least not until they have repaired their images. Kaunda is embarrassed by the raids, coming as they did after his decision on the Rhodesian rail lines and because Zambia put up no resistance to such a deep penetration. Nkomo fears that to agree to talks now would be an admission of weakness. His stiffened resistance to negotiations was predictable, and he is probably considering some retaliation, but Kaunda's measured response to the raids will preclude any major ZAPU military effort.

Nyerere, Machel, and Mugabe appear ready to resume talks, however tentative they may prove to be at the outset. Nyerere remains committed to the Anglo-American Plan because it dovetails with his conviction that Nkomo and Mugabe must return to Rhodesia as equals if civil war between their guerrilla groups is to be avoided. Nkomo's and Mugabe's joint return is no guarantee against civil war, however. Kaunda and Nkomo apparently realize this, hence their pessimism over the plan and their willingness to explore alternative settlements more favorable to Nkomo, as well as Nkomo's desire to have a strong, conventional military force to secure his position once a settlement is reached.

#### ZAPU-ZANU: An Alternative Thesis

With such differences, and considering the long history of antagonism between ZAPU and ZANU forces, the frontline presidents must by now realize that Patriotic Front unity is a lost cause. For Nyerere, however, it is essential that at least the semblance of unity, as symbolized by the Nkomo-Mugabe relationship, be maintained. Neither he nor Machel wishes to be saddled with the military and political problems that would accrue if Nkomo returned to Rhodesia without Mugabe.

Such a move by Nkomo may not be in the cards, however. It is conceivable that he may prefer to return to Rhodesia with Mugabe rather than without him. Once the Patriotic Front, however much a sham it may be, has agreed to a settlement and Nkomo and Mugabe have returned to Rhodesia, the political rationale for their alliance is no longer necessary, for the frontline

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presidents or for Nkomo. Also, Nkomo must be aware--from experiences elsewhere in Africa--of the difficulties guerrilla organizations have converting to conventional military standards and practices. He has concentrated during the past year or so preparing his forces for that conversion. Once inside Rhodesia he will be in a good position to dominate ZANU, particularly if, as he probably supposes, the presently constituted Rhodesian security forces would back him up as head of state in any showdown with ZANU.

Another consideration for Nkomo is the possibility that ZANU is seeking to win the favor of the Soviets and Cubans, who have been giving the bulk of their support to ZAPU. Since August, the Cubans, with the Ethiopians fronting for them, have been delivering shipments of arms and ammunition to ZANU forces in Mozambique from stockpiles in Ethiopia. About 2,000 ZANU guerrillas are undergoing training in Ethiopia, and a small number of Cuban and Ethiopian advisers reportedly are working with ZANU in Mozambique.

The deliveries apparently have helped overcome ZANU's chronic shortage of arms and ammunition. Beyond that, Mugabe and ZANU's military leaders probably want to move closer to conventional parity with ZAPU than is currently the case.

Such a move would be welcomed by Nyerere and Machel on the grounds that if future civil war cannot be avoided by achieving true unity between the two groups, perhaps it can be avoided if neither group has undue advantage over the other. It seems highly unlikely, however, that Soviet and Cuban assistance to ZANU will ever match their assistance to ZAPU, given their longstanding and close association with Nkomo.

If Nkomo wants to keep ZANU on the defensive, he may wish to move toward a settlement before ZANU has made too much progress in its arms buildup and its association with the Cubans.

Mugabe probably believes that his Patriotic Front association with Nkomo has acted as a drag on the tendency toward a separate settlement between Nkomo and Smith and probably prefers to maintain that relationship

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rather than provoke an open breach. His comments following the airliner incident in early September in support of resumed talks may have been designed to put pressure on Nkomo to return to that position as much as to improve his own image at Nkomo's expense. Thus, both Nkomo and Mugabe may be moving closer toward a joint settlement, albeit for distinctly opposite reasons.

The question remains--what kind of talks will the Africans agree to? Smith's willingness to attend an all-parties conference without preconditions is not acceptable to them. They wish to know before a conference what concessions Smith is willing to make in order to reach a settlement. There is likely to be a great deal of political maneuvering before any agreement on a conference is reached. But if the preceding line of reasoning is valid, it suggests that the pressures moving the Africans toward a settlement may be greater than the pressures driving them apart. (SECRET NOFORN-NOCONTRACT-ORCON)

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Sub-Saharan Africa: Fast-Growing Arms Market\*

The Angolan civil war in 1975--in which the rival factions drew support from various Communist and non-Communist nations--touched off a rapid escalation of foreign arms transfers to Sub-Saharan Africa.\*\* Arms sales topped \$3 billion in 1976 and 1977, more than the entire amount committed to the region in the previous 16 years. Deliveries rose in parallel fashion, and both sales and deliveries continued strong in the first eight months of 1978.

	Million US \$	
	Sales	Deliveries
1960-72.....	1,480	1,260
1973.....	320	180
1974.....	550	250
1975.....	515	410
1976.....	1,465	835
1977.....	1,605	1,050

Despite this upsurge, Black Africa accounted for less than 10 percent of the \$40 billion in total military sales to the Third World in 1976-77.

\*These are the key points from a memorandum entitled Sub-Saharan Africa: Fast-Growing Arms Market, (ER 78-10629), October 1978.

\*\*Sub-Saharan Africa, or the Sub-Sahara, or Black Africa, is used in this report to include all continental African countries except South Africa, Namibia, and the nations of Arab North Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt). Also included are the islands of Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Comoros, Sao Tome and Principe, and the Cape Verde Islands.

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Communist military sales to the Sub-Sahara have overtaken Western sales in the past several years and in 1977 made up two-thirds of the total. The USSR alone supplied almost one-half the military goods sold and delivered to the area in the last two years. In contrast, the single largest Western supplier, the United States, sold about 10 percent of the total in 1976 and 1977, while France accounted for 8 percent of the market and West Germany 7 percent.

In every major combat weapons category save naval vessels and utility aircraft the USSR has been delivering more pieces of equipment than all Western suppliers combined. The Soviets also lead in the introduction of relatively advanced weapon systems into the area.

The bulk of foreign-supplied arms have gone to 10 Sub-Saharan nations, which together made up 85 percent of regional purchases in 1976 and 1977. Of these, Angola and Ethiopia have taken more than half of all hardware delivered, mostly from the USSR. Insurgent groups aligned against Rhodesia have also benefited from the renewed Soviet interest in Africa. Moscow transferred, in relatively smooth fashion, an estimated half billion dollars worth of armored vehicles, artillery, jet fighters, and other equipment to Ethiopia between April 1977 and May 1978.

The near-term trend in arms sales and deliveries to Sub-Saharan Africa will be largely determined by the number and scope of military clashes in the area. In the absence of major new military action, we would expect arms sales to the area to recede from their recent peak, with the USSR retaining its new position as the ranking supplier. A sizable backlog of orders, including purchases already made in 1978, will sustain a considerable flow of arms into Ethiopia for the next several years. The continuing civil war in Angola and military buildups in Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zambia suggest a steady flow of Soviet weapons and equipment into these countries for the next year or so. At the same time, Western suppliers should see moderately increased sales as a result of the

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availability of recent additional Saudi financial assistance, particularly to Somalia and Sudan. The perceptible rise in the lethality of weapons introduced into the Sub-Sahara almost certainly will continue, with the Soviets taking the lead in supplying new, more deadly weapons.  
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MALI: A government tribunal handed down death sentences this week to former Defense Minister Doukara and former Security Chief Bagayoko--the two ringleaders in a plot last February to overthrow President Traore. Testimony during the three-day, well-publicized trial, which was open to the public, confirmed that Traore had been told of the coup plans to assassinate him and some of his confidants. The conspirators were apparently motivated by the fear they would lose their privileged positions or suffer some other reprisals under the civilian government Traore plans to install in 1979.

The trials, which apparently satisfied public sentiment for justice, probably helped bolster Traore's image and may have gained support for his plan to return the country to civilian rule. The transition may not be smooth, however. Bagayoko implicated a few members of the ruling military council during his testimony, and opposition to a return to civilian rule still exists among some members of the military. To promote the regime's theme of national reconciliation, Traore may reduce some of the sentences--with the possible exception of the widely despised Bagayoko. Given the harsh conditions in Mali's prisons, however, reductions in sentences do not necessarily guarantee the prisoners' survival. (CONFIDENTIAL) [REDACTED]

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